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# War, Gender and Citizenship in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia

Oliwia Berdak

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University of Edinburgh, School of Law  
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(CITSEE)

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## War, Gender and Citizenship in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia

Oliwia Berdak, University of Edinburgh<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

This paper compares the position of veterans of the Yugoslav Wars 1991-1995 in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia in order to explore the interaction between war, gender and citizenship. In many wars of the last two centuries, an expansion of rights frequently followed a conflict, although that process did not proceed uniformly or equally. The comparison of post-war compensation in BiH, Croatia and Serbia reveals highly varied and gendered outcomes for citizenship. The fragmented nature of the war and its armies has led to multiple narratives about the war, influencing subsequent claims for veteran entitlements. The results for veterans who all participated in the same conflict have been very different depending on which army they joined, and which war narrative prevailed in their place of residence. This war was masculinised in discourse and practice, creating gendered post-war social citizenship in the cases where the citizen-soldier has been rewarded.

### Keywords:

Citizenship, gender, war, military duty, compensation

### 1. Introduction

Between one and one and a half million combatants fought in the Yugoslav Wars between 1991-1995.<sup>2</sup> Some entered the war as conscripts, professionals and volunteers in the Yugoslav National Army (Jugoslavenska narodna armija – JNA) and its remnants. Others joined the newly formed national armies, police forces, semi-criminal paramilitaries and groups organised locally to defend a particular town. After the wars ended, most were de-mobilised. Nevertheless, they continue to be present in the public eye as veterans honoured during annual war commemorations, as protesters demonstrating against cuts to military pensions and entitlements or in the occasional flare-ups of violence with the use of weapons acquired during the war. Interest in the veterans has also been shared by the scholarly community, with a few studies exploring men's motivations for joining up, their social position and political activism as veterans as well as their role in political reconciliation. However, with the exception of Bašić (2004), who compares personal war narratives of former soldiers from all sides, most existing research on this topic focuses on one of the three countries only: Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) (Gregson, 2000; Bojicic-Dzelilovic, 2004; Bougarel, 2006 and 2007; Popić and Panjeta, 2010),

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<sup>2</sup> Referred to from now onwards as the Yugoslav Wars.

Croatia (Fisher, 2003; Žunec, 2006; Berdak, 2012; Pupavac and Pupavac, 2012) and Serbia (Grujić, 2006; Milićević, 2006). Perhaps more surprisingly, no research discusses the combatants in relationship to citizenship, even though military service is often deemed to be the ultimate citizen duty. This paper seeks to fill this gap, exploring varieties in post-war compensation of the citizen-soldier between these countries and its impact on gendered social citizenship.

There is an intimate link between citizenship and war, with the identity of a warrior-citizen (Isin, 1997) or citizen-soldier (Turner, 2001) appearing in most citizenship frameworks. When citizenship emerged as a notion defining the post-revolutionary French nation, it did so amidst discussions of mutual obligations between the state and its citizens. One of these obligations included conscription, which was implemented in 1793 to protect the French Republic from both internal and external enemies. Thus, who could and who had to be in the army also demarcated the boundaries of the emerging nation-state (Tilly, 1995). Citizenship in this context was, however, also very much a site of contestation of rights, since military involvement could be used to demand benefits from the state. Indeed, military service has been used ever since by oppressed and disenfranchised minorities as a route to 'first-class citizenship' (Krebs, 2006). In this way, particularly the wars of the 19th and 20th century have seen some expansion of citizenship, as increasingly mass mobilisation expanded political, civic and social citizenship for veterans amongst new social groups. Of course, this expansion was neither universal nor linear. Women in particular often comparatively lost out as a result of such arrangements, so it is imperative to consider their position when studying post-war citizenship (Ruddick, 1983; Enloe, 1983 and 1990; Yuval-Davis, 1997).

The role of this paper is twofold: to highlight how compensation of the citizen-soldier determines gendered social citizenship in the war's aftermath and to show how that compensation itself is dependent on the state and its ideology. Gender is a very important factor which influences who gets what after the war. The masculinisation of citizenship as embodied by the figure of the citizen-soldier means that women are often not included in post-war compensation schemes, which frequently enhance social rights for the veterans. However, gender is not the only determinant of post-war social outcomes. What the comparison of BiH, Croatia and Serbia illustrates so well is that the post-war expansion of social citizenship relies on other factors as well: the ideological narratives of the war and the relative strength of the state. Many scholars have remarked on the necessary role of the state in guaranteeing social citizenship rights (Bauman, 2005). Veteran entitlements go even further in this regard, betraying the complete state-centricity of these specific citizenship provisions. The state or, as the case of BiH shows, even a powerful sub-state entity, is indispensable as the authority on which claims can be made and which props up the rhetoric of a just war. However, even where such a state is there to pay back its citizen-soldiers, this settlement is likely to come under increased pressure in times of globalisation and liberalisation, highlighting the overall weakness of the

modern state, especially when compared with states that emerged victorious after the Second World War.

The first part of this paper introduces some discussions about the relationship between war and citizenship. These are then related to the specific context of the Yugoslav Wars and their aftermath. I show here how the fragmented nature of the war and its armies has led to multiple narratives of the war, influencing subsequent claims for veteran rights and post-war compensation. I also demonstrate how this war was masculinised in discourse and practice, meaning that where the citizen-soldier has been rewarded, this has effectively created gendered post-war social citizenship. In the conclusion I consider what these varieties in post-war compensation can tell us about the broader notions of citizenship in these countries.

## **2. War and citizenship**

War can have a huge impact on citizenship, changing the boundaries of polities and expanding or limiting political rights within them. However, in this paper I focus mostly on the relationship between the expansion of citizenship rights and the articulation of wartime contribution, since this is where negotiations around citizenship – who is a good citizen, and what they can get from the state in return for their sacrifices and support – are most pronounced. As demonstrated in Table 1 below, this negotiation is most clear in the case of military contribution. As mentioned in the introduction, the beginnings of universal conscription in revolutionary France coincided with the rhetoric of citizenship and nationalism. Those most willing to sacrifice their lives for the Republic were to be rewarded with greater citizenship rights, introducing voting rights for the property-less after the French Revolution (Tilly, 1995). This logic continued much into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In countries where conscription was introduced in the course of the First and Second World War, provisions ensuring particular social rights of veterans and their families were introduced almost simultaneously (Pedersen, 1990; Mettler, 2005). In the case of the United States, the G.I. Bill, formally called the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, extended numerous social benefits to the returning Second World War veterans, including generous education and training benefits, which enabled a huge population of men to go to university. Considering that of men born in 1920, fully 80 per cent were war veterans, the impact this had on men's social citizenship overall was enormous (Mettler, 2005, pp. 5-7).

The high rewards and the rhetorical power associated with military participation have induced many disadvantaged social groups to follow this route to 'first-class citizenship', although, as argued by Krebs (2006), the results of the struggle often depended on a number of factors, including the type of political regime in place. The results have been particularly ambiguous in the case of women, whose participation in armed struggles has not always translated into greater citizenship rights after the cessation of hostilities (Enloe, 1983). The mass-participation of women during the Second World War in Yugoslavia through the

Anti-Fascist Women's Front (Antifašistička fronta žena: AFŽ) and in the Soviet Union was later used as a justification for extending women's rights. However, the situation on the ground was much more nuanced and it is questionable to what extent women's participation in battle was more a reflection of different attitudes of Communists to women and their commitment to women's emancipation rather than its cause (Krylova, 2010; Bonfiglioli, 2012).

The primacy of military service above any other form of contribution has raised questions about the fairness of such an approach which favours men and duties and activities associated with them. The fact that debates about military service are often led in universalist, genderless terms is indicative of a wider bias in the theoretical underpinnings of citizenship. As demonstrated by multiple feminist scholars, men are the 'lurking' citizens behind the supposedly universalist conceptions of citizenship (Lister, 1997; Lister, 2003). After all, if the military service is the 'ultimate citizenship duty', where does this leave the female half of the population, often barred from entering combat (Ruddick, 1983; Enloe, 1983 and 1990; Yuval-Davis, 1997)?

Yet where women have not participated in combat directly, they have sometimes benefited from the expansion of citizenship following a war. In many places, women have successfully re-defined war contribution, arguing that the 'home front' too was indispensable to victory, and demanding rights in return. Moreover, changes wrought by war-related upheaval have frequently contributed to an expansion of social rights for both men and women, as demonstrated by the growing body of literature analysing the relationship between war and the rise of social welfare (Dryzek and Goodin, 1986; Klausen, 1998; Castles, 2010; Kettunen, 2013; Obinger and Petersen, 2013; Starke and Obinger, 2013). Although one cannot speak of a simple causal relationship, a number of factors associated with mass total wars can be said to have contributed to the development of the welfare state, although systematic analysis is still lacking (Obinger and Petersen, 2013).

As argued by the British social researcher, Richard Titmuss, wars can serve as an impetus for national self-reflection and social change, with the Second World War resulting, for example, in the establishment of the Beveridgian welfare state in the UK and the expansion of social citizenship (Turner, 2001, p. 191). Of course, sometimes even just the myth of unity carefully constructed during the war can serve as a basis for claims of greater solidarity through social welfare (Kettunen, 2013).<sup>3</sup> However, even outside of the specific context of the Second World War and its Cold War aftermath, there are more general war-related factors that could result in a post-war expansion of social citizenship for the society as a whole. Castles (2010) provides a good overview of issues such as increased taxation in times of war (which accustoms the population to a greater tax burden which can then be used to finance

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<sup>3</sup> This is visible currently in the UK, with the 2013 film by Ken Loach called *The Spirit of '45* calling for a return to post-war unity and social solidarity.



welfare states), increased size of government with greater welfare capabilities or even preparedness of the population to share risks in face of wartime dangers.

**Table 1 War and expansion of citizenship**

Definition of war contribution	Beneficiaries	
<b>Military</b>	<b>Veterans</b>	
	<b>New rights</b> - e.g. G.I. Bill after WWII: social rights - e.g. voting rights for property-less after the French Revolution	<b>New groups</b> - e.g. AFŽ and women in Yugoslavia after WWII - ethnic minorities: political and civic rights
<b>Broader</b>	<b>Society and various social groups</b>	
	<b>New rights</b> - Social rights after WWII, e.g. UK welfare state	<b>New groups</b> - e.g. voting rights for women after WWI and WWII

However, as this paper demonstrates, in the case of the Yugoslav Wars, the situation is almost reversed. A limited expansion of some social citizenship rights occurred after the war for specific groups of war veterans, war victims and their families. Whilst in all three states the society as a whole gained political and civic citizenship rights associated with liberal democracies, social citizenship rights have been drastically reduced.<sup>4</sup> This is partly because of the comprehensiveness of the previous system: it would be difficult to eclipse the generous social welfare provisions of socialist Yugoslavia. The rights-based discourse of social citizenship as originally defined by T.H. Marshall in 1950 does not fit neatly into this context: any social welfare designed only to protect individuals from the vagaries of capitalist markets is likely to be felt lacking, when compared to the previous socialist model centred around labour ownership. As aptly pointed out by Watson, in the post-socialist context of transition, 'relative equality and universal citizenship are the starting point rather than the stated goal of change' (2006, p. 1081).

Moreover, unlike after the Second World War, post-Yugoslav states are now much weaker as institutions and can only offer limited rewards. This seems contradictory for people who have fought for independence to increase their

<sup>4</sup> Still, the full enjoyment of these new political and civic citizenship rights was often dependent on citizen's ethnic belonging, especially immediately after Yugoslavia's break-up. See previous CITSEE work on the manipulation of citizenship laws to this effect contained in Shaw and Štikš (eds) (2012).

autonomy and control over a given territory. High expectations associated with independence and the sacrifices made for it, bolstered by previous experiences of socialism, do not stand up to reality where, due to pressures from globalisation, states have increasingly adopted the economic model of competition, privatisation and individualisation (Stubbs and Zrinščak, 2009). Instead of a wide post-war expansion of social citizenship, mostly limited targeted benefits have been adopted in these countries for those who are believed to have contributed most to the defence of the nation-states: the veterans. However, not all veterans have benefitted equally. As the following sections of this paper demonstrate, the proliferation of the different armed forces and a lack of a clear chain of command meant that once the war finished, it was not clear who owed what to whom for their service. The contested war narratives and the central role of the state in upholding them have equally exacerbated these uneven outcomes.

### **3. The Yugoslav Wars: Masculinisation and fragmentation**

This section will explore how huge numbers of men in BiH, Croatia and Serbia were almost overnight turned from Yugoslav soldier-citizens, expected to defend the socialist multi-national federation from an external threat, into ethnonational soldier-citizens. This fragmentation of the Yugoslav state and the JNA has resulted in a similarly fragmented war narrative across the three states and varied outcomes for the veterans. I will also demonstrate why speaking of veteran benefits is really speaking of male benefits. Yugoslav militarism, combined with male conscription and gendered discourse of citizen duty during the war ensured that these particular wars were fought almost exclusively by men, with significant consequences for gendered citizenship.

Scholars have argued that the changed nature of warfare in the last couple of decades has enabled more women to enter the military. Modernisation and new military technologies have supposedly made any differences in physical strength less relevant. Of course, this trend is partly conditioned by the type of warfare, with greater 'sexual division of labour between men and women in the military' where there is a strict separation between the battle field and the 'home front' or the 'rear' (Yuval-Davis, 1997, pp. 95-99). Whilst this condition might have applied in the case of Yugoslavia – Serbia and Montenegro – and Croatia in later stages of the war, such a separation hardly existed throughout most of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Considering the violence, including the mass scale of sexual violence, directed at women in that war, women had a reason to become involved (Kašić, 2002, p. 198; Žarkov, 2007, pp. 116-142). However, the remasculinisation of the army and the tying of military duty exclusively with male citizenship in decades following the Second World War managed to overcome local tradition which saw two million women involved on the side of the Partisans, with 100,000 recruited into combat units (Jancar, 1981, p. 144).

Militarism was embedded deeply into the Yugoslav culture, forming an integral part of one of its constitutive myths: the united anti-fascist struggle – the National Liberation War during the Second World War. This myth celebrated both male and female contribution to victory, but as in many other post-conflict societies, the supposed gender neutrality of the citizen-warrior did not survive the test of time. Whilst on paper the figure of *borac* – fighter – could still be male or female, commemorative practices and the institutionalisation of the Yugoslav National Army after the war attached this imaginary mostly to men and masculinity. Those who stayed actively serving in the JNA were men, soon turning it into an entirely male force, with women barred from entry.<sup>5</sup> Militarisation of masculinity (or in this case perhaps the masculinisation of the military) was further reaffirmed through the military service which applied to all men aged 18 and above. The service lasted between one and three years (depending on the unit, the recruit's educational background and the historic period – service was shortened after 1952), and there was no right to conscientious objection (Berdak, 2013). Particularly in more rural settings, huge parties were thrown to celebrate a man's entry into the military, which was treated as a symbolic entry into manhood and the wider community (completing the service was in many places a social prerequisite to marriage).<sup>6</sup>

Yet as ethnic tensions grew in the early 1990s, the Yugoslav National Army, that utmost symbol of a united Yugoslav socialist nation, began unravelling, effectively becoming 'an army without a state', as summed up by its last commander in chief, Veljko Kadijević (1993).<sup>7</sup> A real battle soon emerged over the bodies of men, equating sovereignty, citizenship and the military. As early as summer 1990, Slovenian recruits started avoiding the JNA mobilisation call, insisting they should be allowed to serve in their own republic (it was standard practice that recruits served outside of their home republic) (Marijan, 2008, pp. 417-418). Some of the first legal challenges to Yugoslavia and the JNA's monopoly of violence in its territory came from the new constitution adopted by the Republic of Croatia (still legally a part of Yugoslavia) in December 1990, when Art. 47 shifted the legal responsibility of citizens for the defence of their country from Yugoslavia to Croatia (Constitution of the Republic of Croatia, 1990). Thus, Yugoslav male citizens became primarily Croatian male citizens, and those who did not comply were referred to as bandits. In this vein, the Serb local paramilitary units which were being established in the Republic of Croatia in protest at the latter's growing sovereignty were called *hajduks*

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<sup>5</sup> There was a short-lived experiment to enable women to perform voluntary military service between 1983 and 1985, but this only lasted between two months and 22 days for women soldiers and six months for women officers and did not translate into permanent officer careers (Gombač, in Petrović, 2011, pp. 414-415).

<sup>6</sup> I am grateful to Professor Wendy Bracewell and Dr Sasha Milićević for bringing my attention to this point.

<sup>7</sup> The fact that the JNA on paper ceased to be attached to a particular state and officially dissolved (whilst in reality being commanded by Belgrade authorities) meant that its veterans later would not have a particular authority on which claims to benefits could be made.

by the Croatian government. The old Ottoman term denoting outlaws and rebels was used in an attempt to emphasise their illegal and illegitimate status (Žanić, 2007, p. 115).

At the same time, the JNA soon stopped being the army of 'brotherhood and unity'. Due to a variety of reasons, personal and institutional, by the time large-scale violence erupted in the Republic of Croatia in the summer of 1991, the JNA 'had equated protecting Serbs in Croatia with protecting supporters of Yugoslavia' (Bieber, 2008, p. 320). By autumn 1991, non-Serb officers were mostly purged from the army. Considering prior Serb domination of the JNA, this basically made it into a Serbian army (p. 324). After the JNA military campaign in Slovenia between 27 June and 7 July 1991, desertion only intensified. In response to the limited call-up of the 1st Army in Bosnia and Herzegovina on 20 June 1991, Bosnian Muslim and Croatian political leaders advised called-up men to 'judge for themselves on the spot whether it was necessary to join or not' (Backović et al, 2001, p. 331). By early October 1991, Alija Izetbegović, the President of the BiH Presidency, called upon the citizens not to respond to the mobilisation call. In his televised 'Message to the Citizens of Bosnia-Herzegovina', Izetbegović phrased this specifically in the language of citizenship, 'It is your right and duty as citizens of Bosnia-Herzegovina not to respond to the call-up (...) I call upon you to find the courage to refuse to take part in these evil deeds. Remember, this is not our war. Let those who want it, wage it. We do not want this war' (quoted in Tus, p. 58, footnote 13).

Still, in the increasingly nationalist political and media discourse through the Yugoslav space, Croatian, Bosnian and Serbian men were mostly present as soldiers, a rhetoric which drew on the Partisan myth and the male civic duty associated with it (Sofos, 1996; Renner and Ule, 1998; Bracewell, 2000; Mostov, 2000; Kesić, 2002; Milićević, 2006). In a way reminiscent of many violent conflicts, images used in the media frequently juxtaposed visions of national male heroes with the vulnerable war victims – the evocative 'womenandchildren' compound men were supposed to protect (Enloe, 1990; Senjković, 2002, pp. 143-144). This meant that even as men avoided being drafted into the JNA, many instead ended up in the newly formed national armies and local paramilitaries. This process only intensified in Croatia as a result of the brutal attacks of Serbian paramilitary units, supported by the JNA and evidenced by the waves of refugees flowing from the attacked areas in the summer and autumn of 1991. Grassroots mobilisation in the affected areas was followed by general mobilisation announced in Croatia on 23 November 1991, and it applied to all men living within the Republic of Croatia, even though the government had effectively lost control over a third of its territory. By the end of 1991, the Croatian Army comprised 250,000 men made up of both volunteers and conscripts (Špegelj, 2001, p. 38).

The battle for men was much harder in BiH, where people of different ethnicities did not live in easily demarcated territories, and where one's own ethnicity did not always guarantee support for a particular military force associated with it. Particularly before the eruption of large-scale violence, that is before spring

1992, confusion reigned and few men took up arms. From mid-1991, a few volunteer paramilitary forces were established, mostly associated with the three ethnic parties in power (Shrader, 2003, pp. 24, 33). However, this soon changed as rivalry ensued over the legitimacy to mobilise first the territorial defence units (Teritorijalna odbrana – TO) and later any Bosnian men. First attempts to do so proceeded already from September 1991, starting in the Serbian dominated city of Banja Luka (Delić, 2007, p. 120). However, which side the local TO units picked frequently depended on the loyalties of the local political authority (Hoare, 2004, p. 19).

The situation became more acute after a ceasefire was signed in Croatia on 2 January 1992. After that, significant JNA forces, which included a large number of reservists and new recruits from Serbia, were re-deployed to Bosnia and Herzegovina, igniting the already tense local situation (Divjak, 2001, p. 155). A formal decision to suspend military duty for BiH citizens in the JNA was adopted on 13 March 1992 (Delić, 2007, p. 148). However, the JNA forces, increasingly indistinguishable from the Serbian paramilitaries and the Army of Republika Srpska, did not cease conscripting men. An official declaration of the state of war by the government of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina came on 20 June 1992, together with general mobilisation. Although at that point the Bosnian Army was declared to be the only legitimate army of the multinational state, throughout the war it became associated more and more only with the Muslim part of the population (Hoare, 2004, p. 54). As violence spread throughout the country, more men either mobilised locally to defend themselves or joined one of the existing armies. By the end of the war in 1995, the three ethnicities had succeeded at formulating three mostly ethnically 'pure' armies. And these armies were mostly male: women constituted only approximately 5 per cent of all Croatian forces at the time of the 1991-1995 war (Bradarić and VLM, 2001, p. n/a). This was even less in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, where women amounted to between 2 and 3 per cent of the Army of Republika Srpska (Srna, 2013, p. n/a). As for the Army of Bosnia and Herzegovina, at the end of the war, in December 1995, women numbered only 5,360 out of a total force that could have been as large as 260,000 (Shrader, 2003, pp. 22-23; Radio Sarajevo, 2012, p. n/a).

#### **4. Veteran benefits and citizenship**

The dual legacies of state and army fragmentation and the militarisation of male civic duty have to a large degree affected the varied and gendered outcomes for citizenship in Croatia, BiH and Serbia. The latter factor determined the self-perception of men who fought in the war, serving as a powerful basis for any claims on the state. However, as this section will demonstrate with reference to veteran policies in each of these states, it was the political processes of state and nation-building that made all the difference, creating powerful war narratives and correspondent veteran identities or, in the case of Serbia, failing to do so. Whilst during the war the nationalist leaders of all three ethnicities portrayed the conflict as

a matter of national survival, the war outcomes challenged these narratives significantly.

The results for veterans who all participated in the same war have been very different depending on which army they were a part of, and what narrative about the war prevailed in their place of residence, highlighting how identity is indeed at the heart of citizenship debates (Isin and Wood, 1999). In places where the narrative of a just war prevailed, veterans can draw on it and, as state-builders and protectors, demand corresponding compensation. They can also mobilise to defend their benefits and the nationalist narrative about the war. But this relationship goes both ways: without the state, veteran identity would not exist. For veterans to be able to claim anything, there must be a state which they can legitimately address. The state is crucial in constructing the myth of justifiable violence which will be the basis of these claims.

#### 4.1 Croatia

The Croatian War of Independence, which, with varying degrees of intensity, took place between 1991 and 1995, is referred to in Croatia as the 'Homeland War' (*Domovinski rat*). There is little ambiguity surrounding its aims in the official state discourse: it was both a defence and a struggle for independence. In that sense, Croatia is by far the biggest inheritor of the legacy of the National Liberation War. Here too the war is narrated as an uprising of a united people against the evil external aggression and occupation (that of Serbia and the disloyal Croatian Serbs). Its sanctity is protected by the Croatian Constitution, which identifies the 'Croatian defenders' (*branitelji*) as victorious in the 'righteous, legitimate and defensive Homeland War 1991-1995' (Vlada Republike Hrvatske, 2010, p. 1), establishing a special relationship between the Croatian state and its warrior-citizens. Just like the Partisans in the past, *branitelji*, referred to also as heroes (*heroji*), and knights (*vitezovi*), are seen as the creators of the state and have been elevated to a special citizenship status. An amendment passed by the government in 2010 sanctified the relationship built during the war between them and the Croatian state. The latter is now legally obliged to take care of the veterans, as specified here: 'The Croatian state devotes special efforts for the protection of Croatian defenders, Croatian war veterans, widows, parents and children of fallen Croatian defenders' (p. 2). This has translated into benefits given to the Croatian veterans of the 'Homeland War' being more comprehensive than those given to veterans in Australia, Finland, France, Israel, South Korea, Germany, Russia, U.S., Slovenia, Spain and the UK, and encompass financial, medical, housing, educational, employment and tax benefits (Ferenčak et al, in Žunec, 2006, p. 31).<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Specific laws guiding these provisions can be found on the website of the Directorate for the Defenders, at <<http://www.branitelji.hr/klikni>> (last accessed 26 March 2013).

The narrative of a just war is closely aligned with that of honourable war duty of its warriors and determines veterans' expectations towards the community in return for this service. Unfortunately, because of the nature of the sacrifice – possibly leading to a loss of a limb or life – no single reward is ever deemed appropriate. Socialist Yugoslavia managed to get close, with its generous system of entitlements and commemorations for the Partisans of the Second World War, setting an impossible example to follow. Considering the similarities between the narrative of the 'Homeland War' and the National Liberation Struggle, this has shaped expectations of new generations of veterans as well. As expressed by Boris Beck, a Croatian journalist and himself a veteran, Croatian veterans would like to be unambiguous 'national heroes' (*narodni heroji*), like during Yugoslavia, as well as 'the society's conscience'.<sup>9</sup>

The legacy of the National Liberation War is also visible here in another way: the comparative inclusiveness of the war myth. Throughout the 1990s, the war was always portrayed as a united effort of the entire Croatian nation. Although this narrative effectively excluded the non-ethnically Croatian resident population, it also allowed for a broader definition of wartime contribution. Women who contributed to the war as reporters, nurses and teachers could thus demand some recognition for their role, creating an Association of Women in the Homeland War, which between 2006 and 2009 published six volumes recollecting women's contributions (Berdak, 2010). Still, unlike in the case of the Anti-Fascist Women's Front during the Second World War, this recognition has not translated into any specific women's citizenship rights, since rights have been reserved only for the actual *defenders* – defined as members of the Croatian Army and volunteer and paramilitary units which were later incorporated into the state forces. As explained earlier, only 5 per cent of those were women and even in their case there is some unease about the *branitelj* label. The writer, war-time journalist and female veteran Grozdana Cvitan, for example, sees large differences in the self-perception of male and female veterans. Whilst many of the former have eagerly taken up the veteran identity, the fact that it has been so strongly linked to masculinity makes it more difficult for female veterans to define themselves in that way and claim the associated rights. As she highlights, even the word *branitelj* only exists in the male gender.<sup>10</sup>

Because fighting in the war is perceived as a natural reflection of male civic duty, this creates a feeling of legitimacy and solidarity amongst the veterans and a basis for united political action, something that other groups who suffered during the war are not equally capable of. The veterans are organised in a number of associations, although according to Grozdana Cvitan many of those are inactive or semi-legal, signing up people without their consent to gain more power and funds.<sup>11</sup> Many organisations are linked to the right-wing party that oversaw the creation of

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<sup>9</sup> Interviewed by the author on 16 November 2012 in Zagreb.

<sup>10</sup> Interviewed by the author on 16 November 2012 in Zagreb.

<sup>11</sup> See footnote 9.

the Croatian state – the Croatian Democratic Union (Hrvatska demokratska zajednica: HDZ) – and frequently mobilised by it for political purposes or in defence of veteran privileges (Fisher, 2003). According to Boris Beck,<sup>12</sup> veterans are ‘hostages’ (*taoci*) of the HDZ. However, this relationship is more nuanced and runs both ways. The well-organised veteran associations also attempt to keep the various political parties in check, ensuring the nationalist interpretation of the war is never threatened, and with it the understanding of their role and their entitlements. As highlighted by Ozren Žunec who researches Croatian war veterans,<sup>13</sup> benefits attached to the identity of a veteran have basically turned these men into an interest group, mobilised mostly in defence of their existing rights. They seem to have little political agenda beyond these demands, and this delegitimizes them as autonomous political actors. If they try to critique the existing arrangements, the usual answer they receive is, as Beck says, ‘Why is he kicking up a row, he’s got his pension’.

As a result, many veterans perceive the payments they receive more like a political bribe to keep them silent, rather than proper social citizenship, which they define as a future with secure employment guaranteeing a decent standard of living. According to Beck, ‘The state made a stupid mistake. They gave everyone pensions, [but] these are young, healthy people, they don’t know what to do with themselves’.<sup>14</sup> By not giving them work, HDZ made them into ‘parasites’, argues Tomislav Klauški, a journalist who frequently writes about the Croatian war veterans.<sup>15</sup> According to Klauški, this ‘destroyed generations of young people who do nothing and take pensions’. What these two interviewees are referring to is the poor state of the economy, and the inability of the state to guarantee full employment. The dire economic situation, coupled with post-socialist de-industrialisation, war-related destruction, murky privatizations, mismanagement of the economy by politicians with vested interests, organised crime, corruption and the recent global financial crisis have all contributed to high unemployment and poor working conditions. The Croatian attempt to turn veterans into entrepreneurs lasted only between 1996-1997. Unfortunately, out of 3,133 loans taken by veterans, only 691 borrowers actually started repaying the loan five years later, as the law planned. This only resulted in calls to scrap all the debt (Žunec, 2006, p. 32).

Although it is difficult to arrive at the exact total number of veterans, the ‘register of the defenders’, created by the government between 2004 and 2005 to divide shares in the Fond of Croatian Defenders of the Homeland War and their families, contained 489,407 names (Žunec, 2006, pp. 23-24). This number is quite high for a country of 4.4 million inhabitants and has been a source of controversy since it was leaked onto the Internet in 2010. In the end, in the effort to stop speculation and uncover any ‘false defenders’ (*lažni branitelji*), the government published the register online on 19 December 2012 (*Poslovni dnevnik*, 2012). Whilst the

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<sup>12</sup> See footnote 8.

<sup>13</sup> Interviewed by the author on 16 November 2012 in Zagreb.

<sup>14</sup> See footnote 8.

<sup>15</sup> Interviewed by the author on 15 November 2012 in Zagreb.



public has taken to identifying 'false defenders', challenges have emerged not only to the identity of veterans, but also the extent of their contribution, in particular in the face the weakening of the state at the forces of globalisation. Veterans' demands for greater recognition and associated benefits are increasingly challenged by the rest of the population, impoverished by years of low economic growth, the recent global economic crisis, high unemployment and low wages. Especially that from their perspective, the veterans are clearly privileged. Although one can question whether an average monthly 'Homeland War' veteran pension of HRK5,285 (close to €700 at the March 2013 exchange rate) in December 2010 (Bađun, 2011) guaranteed a decent standard of living, it was in fact very close to the average monthly wage of HRK5,351 in December 2010 (Croatian Statistical Office, 2011).

In times of global competition, economic growth based on consumerism and the scaling back of the welfare state means that national budgets are only able to support a small group of the poorest as well as those who have literally earned it through years of waged employment. This is resulting in a shift in the notions of social contribution: from non-financial to purely financial. Since the veterans fall into the former category, their financial rewards are increasingly seen as a burden on the state. For example, Marijana Bađun from the Croatian Institute of Public Finance has highlighted how Croatian 'Homeland War' pensioners represent only 5% of all beneficiaries yet take up 15% of all resources.<sup>16</sup> Naturally, such discourse creates resentment amongst the veterans who think that their military contribution should enable them to live better than those who made no such sacrifices. As summarised by Grozdana Cvitan, there is now a widespread feeling amongst the veterans that 'I was once ready to die for this country, and this country doesn't recognise that I have nothing'.<sup>17</sup> Yet the kind of social citizenship that was offered in socialist Yugoslavia is no longer accessible.

Of course, there is one group of soldiers here that has lost out entirely in this conflict, falling in between the cracks of warrior-citizenship. The Serbian rebels who took up arms against the growing independence of Croatia lost their struggle. Not having won any territorial autonomy and having failed in their efforts to remain a part of Yugoslavia or join Greater Serbia, their military involvement has not been rewarded by anyone. Although this seems logical, it is not the only possible solution, as will be demonstrated below in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

#### *4.2 Bosnia and Herzegovina*

In terms of narrative unity, the conventional story of the Croatian War of Independence is simple, clearly identifying the aggressors (Croatian Serbs, the Yugoslav National Army and neighbouring Serbia) and the defenders (those defending the sovereignty of the Croatian state), and rewarding the latter for their

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<sup>16</sup> Email correspondence with the author, 2 January 2013.

<sup>17</sup> See footnote 9.

citizen duty. In Bosnia and Herzegovina's splintered sovereignty established after the Dayton Peace Agreement, this is far from the case.<sup>18</sup> The country's fragmented political system has allowed competing war narratives to co-exist. The two main entities, Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH) and Republika Srpska (RS), define the war differently and accordingly also its heroes and victims. Where there are attempts to define the war as an act of aggression on a sovereign state of BiH, these are bitterly contested. For example Rasim Delić, the former JNA general and later the Chief of Staff of the Army of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, talks of a defensive war of BiH 'against Serbian and Croat aggressors, and their helpers amongst Bosnian Serbs and Croats' (2007, p. 3), a 'classic aggression' (p. 11), put in the context of 'antifascist and national liberation wars' (p. 15). Yet the armies associated with the Bosnian Serbs and Croats also frequently portray themselves as the valiant defenders of their particular ethnic groups, worthy of compensation and rewards for their wartime losses and sacrifices. For example, one of the laws regulating veteran entitlements in Republika Srpska targets the 'Disabled War Veterans and Families of Soldiers Fallen in the *Defensive and Fatherland War of Republika Srpska*' (Šoštarić, 2012, pp. 49-50; emphasis added).

In practice, this leads to a bizarre situation where even those who fought against the state are now rewarded or compensated by one of its components. They are thus all equally established as heroes or victims and rewarded accordingly. Yet the practices of compensation emphasise ethnic rather than civic belonging and undermine the Bosnian state. For examples, there are sometimes questions about the authority that owes compensation to the Bosnian Croat soldiers, who could have been fighting both in Croatia and in Bosnia in different periods of the conflict, and therefore can be rewarded by both states. However, even where the Bosnian Croats were not involved in the 'Homeland War' but only fought in BiH, they can still be rewarded by the Croatian state. A bilateral agreement adopted by Croatia and BiH in 2006 enabled veterans of the Croatian Defence Council (Hrvatsko vijeće obrane) who are Croatian citizens resident in BiH to be paid by the Croatian state benefits equivalent to those of Croatian soldiers who served in Croatia proper (Sarajlić, 2012, p. 17).<sup>19</sup> This agreement was reached despite the official separation by the Croatian government of the BiH conflict from the 'Homeland War' and a firm denial of any military involvement in BiH. Yet clearly military duty and sacrifice in this case have more of an ethnic nature and can refer to the defence of the Croatian nation rather than the Croatian state.

The same principle of embracing its ethnic warriors does not apply to Serbia, which denies any links with Bosnian Serb veterans, who rely for their benefits exclusively on the sub-state carved out within BiH: Republika Srpska. In the case of

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<sup>18</sup> The country was effectively split into the autonomous entities of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska and the Brčko District.

<sup>19</sup> Eldar Sarajlić details how providing social welfare to ethnic Croatian veterans living in BiH by the Croatian state reflects the importance of the latter's ethnic citizenship framework in determining policies of social re-distribution (2012).

Bosnian Muslims, on the other hand, religion can play a big role in strengthening the veteran male identity. As highlighted by Bougarel (2006), during the war, Islam was used to bolster the motivation and the fighting spirit of Bosnian Muslims. As a result, religious martyrdom came to dominate the remembrance of the war and its fallen soldiers in that community, centring on the figure of the *šehid* – martyr. *Šehidi* and their families are rewarded by FBiH.

All of these war narratives, whilst essentially contradictory, in practice reaffirm the figure of the citizen-soldier within BiH as a whole. Both the Federation of BiH and Republika Srpska separately use a large chunk of their fiscal resources to provide for veterans and their families, whose numbers are considerable. Like in Croatia, it is difficult to establish how many veterans there are precisely in BiH, but according to Tamara Šmidling from the Sarajevo Peace Academy, as many as 80 per cent of men above the age of 37 could be former combatants.<sup>20</sup> The World Bank places this figure at between 400,000 and 500,000 men (in Bougarel, 2006, p. 479). In terms of war-related benefits, in 2009 nearly 100,000 war invalids were entitled to disability benefits (Popić and Panjeta, 2010, pp. 11-12).<sup>21</sup> Many more are entitled to (often early) military pensions and additional financial and non-financial benefits related to healthcare, taxation, housing, transport and employment (Gregson, 2000, p. 3). In RS, the only men who are legally excluded from claiming compensation are those who committed war crimes – but only if at the time they were fighting on the ‘enemy side’, that is against Serbs (Popić and Panjeta, 2010, p. 28). All other indicted war criminals are still entitled to veteran payments. The only other combatants who were initially excluded from the privileged citizen status were the veterans of the Army of the Autonomous Province of Western Bosnia, since they did not secure any recognition or autonomy in post-war BiH, but even that has been changed.<sup>22</sup> Following the 2005 ruling of Bosnia’s Constitutional Court, they too have been granted veteran rights (Ibid.).

Such a system of post-war compensation ensures that most men who fought are rewarded for their assumed positive war contribution. On the other hand, it is rather inconceivable for a woman to be a *šehid* for example. On the contrary, if women are ever mentioned in the context of the Bosnian war, it is predominantly as rape survivors, of which there could be between 20,000 and 50,000 (Amnesty International, 2009, p. 5). However, few benefits or reparations are associated with that status. In the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, a special status for rape survivors was established only in 2006, prompted by a legal ruling. However, this is not the case in Republika Srpska, where rape survivors are treated like any other civilian victims of war, who all have to prove 60 per cent disability in order to be able to claim any war-related payments. In contrast to that, war veterans need to prove

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<sup>20</sup> Interviewed by the author on 20 November 2012 in Sarajevo

<sup>21</sup> Like in Croatia, this refers to previously active soldiers with minimum 20 per cent disability.

<sup>22</sup> Autonomous Province of Western Bosnia existed between 1993 and 1995, proclaimed by the Bosnian Muslim industrial magnate from the area, Fikret Abdić. The province cooperated with both Croat and Serb forces against the central Bosnian government.

only 20 per cent bodily damage in order to be eligible for payments (Šoštarić, 2012, p. 50-54). More frequently, women can claim war-related benefits only as wives or daughters of BiH veterans, highlighting their status as dependents, and in practice reaffirming the male status as a provider and head of the household.

Just as in Croatia, veterans here have been much more successful on drawing on the state-sponsored war narratives to make claims on the state. Even where the civilian victims of war or women have organised around the symbol of victim, the importance of the citizen-soldier and politicians' fear of unrest amongst former combatants have prevented any major change to the system of compensation. Veteran associations, many of which had been established as early as 1993, have organised a number of protests every time their benefits have been under threat (Bougarel, 2006, p. 482; Latal, 2009; Zuvella and Jelenek, 2010). The political fragmentation along ethnic lines has actually propped up the system, since any time one of the entities tries to address the benefits, its veterans compare themselves to their counterparts across the entity boundary.<sup>23</sup> However, the weakness of the state has introduced one type of actor which has consistently challenged the veteran associations: international institutions.

Ever since the end of the war, a number of large international organisations have been involved in BiH either as donors or de facto administrators of the state. Many of them, particularly the international financial institutions (IFIs), have pushed an agenda of privatisation and liberalisation in support of economic growth. The IFIs have insisted that BiH needs to regain international competitiveness through domestic investment and the lowering of labour costs. Veteran benefits, as one of the highest financial commitments of the state, have thus become their target. The World Bank has calculated that the 'non-contributory' veteran benefits (contribution is defined in financial terms) amounted to 2.44 per cent of total GDP in 2010 and took up most of social assistance whilst having a minimal impact on the reduction of poverty (World Bank, 2012, p. 36). As a result, there has been huge pressure from many international institutions present in BiH to reduce these entitlements, or at least target them better (according to need rather than category, but still reducing overall spending). According to a senior employee of a large international organisation in Sarajevo,<sup>24</sup> the state is failing to send the 'signal that the war is over, and you need to start working, you need to start bringing income to your family', and that 'the message that is given to these people is wrong, the message is that state will take care of you, instead of the state will provide you with all sorts of opportunities to blossom' (by which he means employment). Whilst the IFIs may lack legitimacy in the country, they have the power of the purse. The reduction of privileged military pensions was one of the requirements set out by the IMF for its

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<sup>23</sup> Again, similarly to Croatia, the associations are connected to specific, in this case ethnic, political parties and mobilised to push for more advantageous political solutions, taking a prominent public role (Bojicic-Dzelilovic, 2004, p. 7).

<sup>24</sup> Interviewed by the author on 19 November 2012 in Sarajevo.

next loan and in order to receive it, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina passed a law to that effect April 2013 (Sito-Sucic, 2013, p. n/a).

Yet the veterans are a very diverse group, and their expectations of post-war lives vary too, as reflected by one Bosnian veteran (who wanted to remain anonymous) interviewed by the author on 19 November 2012 in Sarajevo. The man recalled a wartime conversation with a fellow combatant, in which he was expressing his hopes for the war to finish soon in order to be able to return to his 'normal' life to finish his studies and get a job. His interlocutor had a very different image of the post-war life, however, saying that he was not fighting for Bosnia only to have to work again in the future. Indeed, since the end of the war he has managed to finance his life through a variety of veteran entitlements, despite having suffered no disability from combat.

#### *4.3 Serbia*

The fact that serving the state as a soldier does not automatically translate into special citizenship provisions is clearly demonstrated by the situation of former combatants in Serbia. Whilst veterans in BiH and Croatia have been compensated for their wartime services, in Serbia they are mostly unorganised and invisible. According to Noa Treister from the Centre for Cultural Decontamination, which organises workshops with veterans, in Serbia there could be between 400,000 and 800,000 war veterans.<sup>25</sup> These estimates include the large numbers involved in Kosovo, so the veterans of the 1991-1995 wars would be fewer. However, the reason why there are no precise numbers is because the state still denies having been at war throughout the 1990s (since such an admission would have legal repercussions for war reparations, for instance), insisting any engagements as part of the Yugoslav National Army were simply 'manoeuvres' within Serbia or conducted by volunteers not related to the Serbian state.<sup>26</sup> Of course, this stands in stark opposition to the findings of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) as well as private litigations in Serbia demonstrating forceful conscription in Yugoslavia of Serbian men before their dispatch to Croatia (Opačić et al, 2006). However, it is not only the state that would like to forget about these men but also the wider society, for whom they are a symbol of the wars and the defeat in them, or potentially war criminals (Grujić, 2006, p. 35).

This denial and a lack of a clear narrative of a legitimate war have translated into a lack of mobilisation of the veterans. In fact, one could say that the identity of a veteran has not been formed at all. When working with workers fighting for their labour rights in a factory in Serbia, Treister was surprised to find out that half of them had fought in the war, but none thought of themselves as veterans. However, this has been changing recently, with more and more men self-identifying as

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<sup>25</sup> Interviewed by the author on 22 November 2012 in Belgrade.

<sup>26</sup> Apart from the NATO bombing campaign of Serbia in 1999.

veterans and organising around issues related to invalidity, unpaid military wages, social assistance etc. A group of reservists drafted into the Yugoslav Army during NATO intervention between March and June 1999 has even pursued the Serbian state for the payments of per diem allowances in front of the European Court of Human Rights. Of course, this is only possible because that conflict is recognised by Serbia as a war that took place in its territory. The Court ruled in favour of the applicants, though in February 2012, at the request of Serbia, the case was referred to the Grand Chamber (*Vučković and Others v. Serbia*, 2012). The visibility of the case has spurred others to organise in a similar way (*Politika*, 2013).<sup>27</sup>

## 5. Gendered contribution, gendered outcomes

It is not unusual to have large welfare systems in post-conflict societies, as often there is a large number of people who have suffered enormously during the war and are in greater need of state protection, for example due to disability or destruction of livelihood. However, in this context the masculinisation of the war and the triumph of the nationalist war narratives in Croatia and BiH have skewed post-war compensation strongly towards certain categories of men.<sup>28</sup> When we look at war-related entitlements in both of these countries, it becomes very apparent how many of them are tied to the privileged status of citizen-soldier, defining overall post-war social citizenship.

Payments given to the veterans are not based solely on their needs due to, for example, invalidity since that would not be reason enough to create a differentiated status for veteran invalids as compared to any other invalids. However, this is currently the case in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with veteran invalids receiving higher payments than any others, even for the same level of disability (World Bank, 2012). For example, in 2009 a civilian with 100 per cent invalidity would receive a monthly payment of BAM375 in RS and BAM514 in FBiH, as compared to BAM650 and BAM734 respectively in the case of a military invalid (Popić and Panjeta, 2010). Moreover, as mentioned earlier, civilian invalids in BiH need to demonstrate much higher levels of disability (60 per cent as opposed to 20 per cent for military invalids) to gain access to benefits in the first place.

If, on the other hand, these entitlements are a form of compensation (for exposing these men to danger), then the civilian victims of war should surely be treated equally. After all, as highlighted by the anthropologist Ivana Maček, in besieged Sarajevo, 'combatants and civilians were largely confronted with the same dangers, the same material difficulties, and the same moral dilemmas' (in Bougarel, 2006, p. 483). However, a distinction is made between these two groups, with military war victims – those who were active members of the armed forces –

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<sup>27</sup> See also the roundtable organised by the Belgrade-based Centre for Cultural Decontamination (2011), entitled *Imenovati TO ratom* [Naming IT war].

<sup>28</sup> This analysis does not apply to Serbia since, as detailed earlier, it offers very limited post-war compensation.

receiving more money. As highlighted by Grujić,<sup>29</sup> in all three states, civilian war victims do not enjoy the same status or associated benefits as military war victims – the veterans (see also Popić and Panjeta, 2010). As a result, in BiH veteran benefits amounted to 2.4 per cent of the country's GDP in 2010, as compared 1.5 per cent of GDP spent on civilian benefits (including those not related to the war) (World Bank, 2012, p. 36).<sup>30</sup>

Duties and activities associated with militarism, which in this context is attached to men, are rewarded. This is frequently justified on the basis of the special contribution by the soldiers. There seems to be an implicit assumption that if a man spent that time with a gun in his hand, this was an act for the benefit of state or society. Žunec, for instance, argues that this preparedness to sacrifice one's life for the community is essentially priceless, and cannot be compensated (2006, p. 35). Yet the idea of soldier sacrifice can be quite romanticised, considering that in this particular war (as perhaps in many others), enlisting offered some soldiers chances of empowerment and enrichment through looting, smuggling and other criminal activities such as rape. Criminal but also social networks established during the war also determined access to jobs, positions and connections in the post-war period.

Importantly, this approach automatically creates an unequal system of citizenship rights and duties, since women often could not volunteer (or were restricted in doing so), and so would never be able to receive the same sort of recognition. At the same time, their potential sacrifices as doctors, nurses and reporters at the front have not been equally rewarded. Women are strongly disadvantaged in a post-war social citizenship system dominated so much by the figure of citizen-soldiers. They are more likely to be civilian rather than military victims of war and thus receive less money as individuals and overall.<sup>31</sup> Moreover, with such a huge chunk of state resources devoted to veteran benefits, other areas of social welfare suffer. Since women more often rely on welfare as those in higher risk of poverty (due to lower employment, lower wages, lower pensions or as single mothers), they are inherently affected.

## 6. Conclusion

In this paper I have considered the relationship between citizenship, gender and war. In many wars of the last two centuries, an expansion of rights frequently followed a conflict, although that process often did not proceed uniformly or equally. Existing rights could be extended to include minorities and social classes which had contributed to war victory, and which were previously excluded from full

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<sup>29</sup> Interviewed by the author on 23 November 2012 in Belgrade.

<sup>30</sup> Out of that, 0.8 per cent of GDP was spent on civilian disabled and civilian victims of war and between 0.6 and 0.7 per cent of GDP devoted to last-resort social assistance for the poor, family and child protection benefits, ad hoc one-time financial assistance (World Bank, 2012, p. 37).

<sup>31</sup> The lack of statistics regarding the division of beneficiaries of both military and civilian benefits by gender is illustrative of the overall gender-blindness of the post-war compensation system.

citizenship. Alternatively, new rights could also be made available exclusively to veterans. Contribution in times of war could be sometimes negotiated to include non-military contributors, such as women, enabling them to claim rights. Lastly, wars could result in a more radical overhaul of citizenship, adding new social citizenship rights for the entire population.

The analysis of post-war compensation in BiH, Croatia and Serbia has revealed highly varied and gendered outcomes for social citizenship. The fragmentation of Yugoslavia and its armies has resulted in fragmented and contested war narratives which have influenced the ability of former combatants to build a coherent veteran identity and make claims to compensation based on it. In Croatia and in both entities of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the war is frequently seen as a justified defence against the aggressor, resulting in a legitimate identity of 'veteran as defender' and a relatively generous system of benefits for them. In Serbia, a dissonance exists between the former combatants who maintain they fulfilled their duty protecting either Yugoslavia or the Serbian nation, and the government which pretends Serbia was never involved in the war. This means that soldiers who came from Serbia proper – even those who were forcefully conscripted – do not have a way to seek compensation for their military service. This differentiation between the different groups of war veterans is important, as all too frequently a simple equation has been posited between nationalism, militarism and male interests (Bracewell, 2000). Here we can see that not all men benefit equally from war, and that the status of citizen-soldier, and the duties and rights of male citizenship, can be hugely contested.

However, if any expansion of citizenship did occur in these states, then it was that predominantly associated with male citizenship and the figure of citizen-soldier. As I demonstrated throughout this paper, this war was masculinised in both discourse and practice, with women not only mostly not participating in combat, but also unable to claim rights based on other roles they have played. Norms of masculinity still determine what it means to be a good citizen, continuing to condition men's behaviour but also structuring a system of state benefits and entitlements privileging duties, actions and activities usually associated with men. Former combatants from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia have not only been compensated for their wartime losses; they have also been rewarded simply for their participation in war, with a positive assumption attached to that military participation.

These varied outcomes also tell us a fair deal about the general features of citizenship regimes across the three states: Croatia's ethnocentrism, Bosnia's fragmentation and Serbia's ambiguity. Croatia's generous reward of its citizen-soldiers reaffirms the state-sponsored narrative about the 'Homeland War' as the grounding myth of the Croatian nation-state. However, the fact that Croats resident in BiH who have fought either in the Croatian Army in Croatia or in the Croatian militias in BiH can be rewarded with Croatian citizenship and veteran benefits paid by the Croatian state demonstrates the central role of ethnicity in its citizenship



regime. In BiH, the competing war narratives and veteran compensation schemes operating in the two entities testify to the divided and ethnicised nature of its citizenship. In Serbia, on the other hand, the lack of any policies towards the veterans points to the competing narratives about its statehood and its boundaries.

Research presented here also points to the potential future developments of social citizenship in the region. The weakness of all three states in the face of global economic competition has increasingly put pressure even on the revered model of citizen-soldier. Because there has been no society-wide expansion of social citizenship following the Yugoslav Wars, in times of indebtedness and austerity, there is a greater competition for state resources and contestations of the current schemes of redistribution. The pressure to contribute economically is very much present, since, as Bauman argues, in today's time of liquid modernity, people who are not productive are 'flawed consumers'; they are redundant, and the community might not want to shoulder their burden (2005, p. 18). The perfect citizen is no longer the soldier-citizen but the working and consuming citizen. The implications of this statement go much beyond the former Yugoslavia. In the age of corporate soldiers and wars fought by drones, there is a risk that states stop caring about the quality of their 'stock', adding yet another reason to shed state responsibility for their populations.

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